
Opening Doors

I am standing before the door: Beyond it The Meeting takes place. My hands are trembling. I'm very scared and there are tears starting to well up in my eyes. Through the open door I can hear voices, even laughter. This can't be the right room! Do they really know my pain? That's what I've been told. I will never again be able to laugh like them. Please give me the strength to do this. We sit together and each person gives an account of what has brought them here. There is so much pain I can barely speak through my emotions. Yet, they all listen and as the meeting ends, someone touches my hand.

I'm at the door again. Please give me the strength to go through. As I take my seat I see familiar faces. They smile and I try to smile back. Do they know how hard this is for me? Was it ever this hard for them? There are so many sad stories. Maybe they *do* feel my pain! I shed more tears. This time I am able to ask a few questions through muffles and sobs. Still, they all listen and as the meeting ends, someone touches my hand.

I've prayed for strength many times as I've entered this room. Each time, as stories are shared, I realize they do know my pain. I feel stronger now so I can share without crying. I realize that all along they were easing their own pain by helping me through mine.

A new person comes through the door and takes the seat next to me. The newcomer sheds many tears as attempts are made to talk through muffled sobs. We all listen and as the meeting ends, I touch a hand.

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